



**Federal Aviation
Administration**

**Russ Chew 1-800-FAA-NEWS Phone Message
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Hello, this is Russ Chew with this week's update for January 20.

This week, we had our monthly executive Flight Plan performance meeting where we compare our year-to-date results to our performance targets through December. I am happy to report that of the 31 Flight Plan goals, we are GREEN in over 93% of our goals, which means that we are "in the red" in two of our goals – the commercial fatal accident rate and our airport average daily capacity. One goal that was RED last month, our category A and B operational error rate, has now turned GREEN due to our better December numbers. In fact, our December error rate was an eleven percent improvement over the last year.

The credit, of course, goes to our En Route, Oceanic, and Terminal controllers for their skill and discipline in avoiding errors, our supervisors staying alert and taking action on conditions that lead to errors, and our managers for their attention to raising error awareness in our facilities. Both ATO Terminal and En Route are working closely with ATO Safety to analyze and identify the conditions that lead to errors and reduce the risk of their occurrence.

The numbers show that our En Route controllers have consistently been improving their error rate -- performing better than the performance limit by more than fifteen percent (66 vs 78) and bettering last year's performance by seventeen point five percent (66 vs 80).

Unfortunately our Terminal controllers performed worse than the performance limit by twenty five percent in October and November; though in December, they did manage to improve by fifteen percent over last years' numbers. Because this is typically the time of year when we do best, we need to work hard now to improve our error rate before we enter the busier spring and summer travel periods – where our operational error numbers generally get worse.

The other RED metric where we're below our goal is our Airport Average Daily Capacity. Although we did better than our December monthly target, we are still RED when you add it up year-to-date. But it is improving, and Terminal and System Ops are working hard to review and ensure the accuracy of our called arrival rates every hour of every day. If the weather is not much worse than last year, we hope to turn this goal GREEN before year-end.

Also this week, I'd like to mention that we've started taking action on the results from our in-depth review of our air traffic controller training practices. From this, we will be making permanent improvements in our tracking and training processes. In support of this initial effort, Maureen Knopes (NOPS) has been announced as the Interim Lead for Air Traffic Controller Training – and the job announcement for a new ATO Director of Air Traffic Controller Training is now on the street. The closing date for that announcement is February 17, 2006.

Our near term focus will be on tracking the progress of our developmental controllers, and developing a new national database to help keep track of detailed information on each developmental's training progress. We will be looking for ways to improve our facility training practices; such as reviewing the standardization in how we approach it across our facilities. In the longer run, we will be looking to improve the fidelity of our training simulation to provide better and more available opportunities for the particular traffic skills that are needed for each individual facility.

A human-centered design approach is essential to increasing the quality of our training, our service, and our productivity in delivering it. In short, the goal is “better and more effective training” while we reduce overall training time to certify. This will help us to reduce our future training costs and help us to improve the productivity of our ATO workforce at the same time; and this is key to making sure we can meet the challenge of replacing our increasing number of retiring controllers over the next 10 years.

Finally, we are now accepting bids to fill the top leadership positions in the newly named service centers in the Eastern, Central and Western Service Area offices. The service centers represent an all-new approach to managing ATO administrative and technical support services; and this includes looking closely at streamlining our administrative and support processes.

This will require us to develop all-new ways of working across our organizational lines, so we can provide better and more consistent services across the ATO. Our goal here is to lower our overhead costs by reducing the number of people needed in our service areas. The centers will be colocated with the three FAA regional offices in Atlanta, Fort Worth and Seattle. The vacancy announcement closes on February 14, 2006, and is open to qualified ATO “L Band” employees only. This bid announcement is available at: <http://jobs.faa.gov>.

That’s it for this week. Thanks for listening, and I’ll talk to you again next week.